

## Enclosure of letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Alexander Melville Bell, November 13, 1892

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(Copy.) 1. Fay & Bell Kendall Green. Washington. D. C. October 22, 1892. Dear Dr. Bell;

I have delayed writing you on the subject of Classification Schools for the Deaf hoping your address at Colorado Springs would be published and I might have it before me, but as there seems no immediate prospect of its publication, and I think I got a pretty clear idea of the classification proposed, I will delay no longer.

As this correspondence is not for publication, but to be read only by the three members of the Committee who carry it on, I will state my objections to the proposed classification as concisely as possible, without the amplification that would be desirable for readers not thoroughly familiar with the subject.

1. You propose that the methods of instruction pursued in our school s be divided into “two broad classed, employing (1) English and (2) other languages (Sign-language)”.

My objection to that is that there are no schools employing “other languages ‘(Sign-language)’” to the exclusion of the English language. Your classification would imply that schools belonging to the second class do not employ English. That would not be true, and would do the ? m a great injustice.

2. You propose that these “be further divided according to the specific methods of instruction, as

(1.) Oral methods, divided into the Auricular method and the speech-rudi 2 and the speech-reading method.

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(2) Manual methods (The manual alphabet method) and

(3) Sign methods (the Bell "Epee sign-language method").

Now there are a good ? m any schools that employ all these methods in various ways and degrees; they are called at present "Combined System" schools. I have no special fondness for that term and would gladly adopt a better one if one were offered; but it is certainly desirable to have some term to apply to these schools, and it is an objection to your classification that it offers none.

I will send a copy of this letter to Dr. Noyes. Will you please send him a copy of your reply? I will ask him, when she receives that, to express his opinion in a letter to me and to send you a copy of the letter. This is not so satisfactory a way of discussing the matter as if we three could talk it over together; but the latter plan does not seem feasible at present.

Very truly yours, E.A. Fay. Dr.A.G.Bell. Baddeck. N.S.

Beinn Bhreagh, Victoria County. and the Nova Scotia, November 2nd, 1898. Professor B.A. May Randall Green, Washington, D. C. My Dear Professor Fay:

As my paper "Upon the Classification of Methods of Instructing the Deaf" has not yet been published, the remarks contained in your note of the 22nd. It, were, of course, made from only a general recollection of the subject matter.

I now forward, with this letter, a copy of my address as revised for publication, from which you will see that your objections are largely answered in the paper itself. For example:

1. Your first objection is rather apparent than real for the Paper shows that the classification does not imply that methods belonging to the " Second Class", do not teach the English language. "That", as you say, "will not be true, and would do them a great injustice ".

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2. The second objection also, is answered in the Paper itself, for I think you will find, upon careful perusal, that the classification does provide terms for the methods now included under the name of "Combined Systems".

I need not enlarge upon these points as you have the paper before you. I would direct your attention however to the fact that the subject of the enquiry is not the classification of "Schools", but of "Methods of Instructing the Deaf". If these were satisfactorily classified the schools would be sufficiently defined by specifying the methods of instruction pursued in them.

Schools employing a single method alone would naturally be termed "Oral" / , "Manually" / , and "Sign" Schools or, if we desire to be specific / , "Auricular , Schools", "Speech-reading Schools", "Manual Alphabet Schools", and "The " Bell Sign-Language Schools.

In cases where more than one method is pursued then , under the head of "Method of Instruction" in the Statistical Tables of the Annuals, the methods pursued should be specified. For example: — "Oral and Manual" &c. This would mean that some of the pupils are instructed by Oral Methods and some by Manual ; and it should be stated, I think, somewhere in the Annuals, how many are taught by each method.

Schools in which all the methods are employed might, very properly be termed Eclectic Schools.

Although this correspondence is of course intended . , as you say, "to be read only by the three members of the Committee who carry it on" / , still / , I think it would be well for us to write with a view to possible publication. The heads of the schools for the deaf in America have delegated to us the consideration and discussion of a very important subject; and should we be unable to agree upon a Report, it would only be right and proper that the whole correspondence should be made public , so that the profession

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might see how we have discharged the duties devolving upon us. I would like to obtain the views of Professor, Dr. Noyes and yourself upon this point.

I send a copy of this letter to Dr. Noyes together with a copy of my Colorado Address. I will ask him to write to you upon the subject, and send me a copy of this letter. It will then be in order. I suppose